

Chapter 10

MOUNTAINVIEW SECTION

The Mountainview section is the area west of Tanglewood Lane lying north of Meyersville Road and Fairmount Avenue and south of most of the Great Swamp National Wildlife Refuge (GSNWR). The rear portions of all the lots north of Meyersville Road and the northerly lots north of Fairmount Avenue lie in wetlands. A Black Brook tributary originating at the Tanglewood wastewater treatment plant (WTP#1) and running parallel to Meyersville Road and Fairmount Avenue receives natural drainage from stormwater and springs, effluent from storm sewer piping, and all of the water discharged from the treatment plant.

In the western part of the section adjacent to the power line right-of-way (ROW), which runs parallel to Meyersville Road, there is a large stand of mature white pine trees on a knoll. The ground adjacent to the pine trees is covered with pine needles. There is a small pond among the trees. *Pyrola*, a native wildflower, can be found here. Rising out of the swampy terrain behind the municipal building are mossy hummocks supporting red maples and aquatic plants such as duckweed. A muskrat was observed swimming in the Black Brook tributary. Traces of old trails and campsites indicate that the area was formerly important for outdoor recreation. The area has been left relatively undisturbed for long enough that a swamp (palustrine) ecosystem has developed.

Long Hill Lane, Cypress Road and Evergreen Road are built on a ridge of land slightly higher than the surrounding areas. Evergreen Road is currently only partially paved and does not extend all the way to the power lines. To the northwest on the other side of the power lines several homes are built on areas of higher ground. One home has been purchased by the GSNWR to be used for staff housing. Those homes are surrounded by abundant laurel bushes, large beech trees and evergreens.

The area in the eastern part of the Mountainview section is on higher ground and is dryer. The Stonewyck and Pembroke Road developments were constructed in the late 1970s. The Karlin Drive development was constructed in the 1980s. This site when inventoried in 1973 contained several springs and streams. The property at the northeast end of Karlin Drive is owned by Chatham Township; the parcel next to that, fronting on Fairmount Avenue, has a conservation easement on the wet backyard.

Because of wetlands, development in the Mountainview section has been curtailed. Conservation easements have been placed on the wet northern portions of several properties. At the eastern end of the section is a property owned by Chatham Township that was formerly used for camping by Boy Scouts and that has been maintained as open space. Several vacant properties, mostly in wetlands, on the north side of Maple Road were acquired by the Township for non payment of taxes. Long Hill Road (not to be confused with Long Hill Lane) now ends in a cul-de-sac and is unlikely ever to be extended to the powerline right-of-way.

The power line right-of-way has a raised dirt maintenance road but is otherwise very wet. Water-loving plants such as cattails and phragmites exist in great abundance in the ROW. Wildflowers (goldenrod, spreading dogbane, cattail), invasive species (multiflora rose, tatarian honeysuckle, Japanese barberry, phragmites) and grasses (broomsedge, little bluestem) also abound, and the waterways are host to ducks and geese. The power line right-of-way also supports red-tailed hawks, possibly red-shouldered hawks (listed as endangered in New Jersey) and red-winged blackbirds. Laurel groves are common on the north side of the ROW as are vernal ponds. The lands under the power lines are used for hiking and cycling.

Adjacent to WTP#1 are two abandoned sewage settling ponds, now filled with rainwater, surrounded by mostly intact chain link fencing. The area inside the fence is protected to some extent from deer browsing and has become habitat for plant species that otherwise would be eaten.

OPEN SPACE

The wet areas in the rear of large private properties north of Meyersville Road can be considered open space. Also open is the land (public and private), almost all wetlands, behind the Chatham Township municipal building, along and behind Maple Road (public and private), around the end of Evergreen Road (private), and behind the northern properties in the Pembroke and Karlin developments (public). Some private areas have been preserved with conservation easements. Chatham Township owns vacant land west of WTP#1, around the municipal building, at the northeast end of Karlin Drive and a parcel on Fairmount Avenue.